

THE HISTORY OF PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICE FOR  
NEGROES IN SALISBURY, NORTH CAROLINA  
1937 - 1963

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

The degree of progress of any nation is influenced by the percentage of its citizenry that can read. A nation can neither reach its full potential nor contribute fully to the growth of the community, city and country if it is not well informed. Reading plays an important role in civic life, and it should produce a well-informed citizenry. The public library is the institution which can and has been devised to help this need.

Reading is a basic tool in the living of a good life: Those who can use it to learn from books, as well as be amused by them, have access to the stores of knowledge. They can furnish their minds so that the prospect of hours spent alone is less bleak. Nor in the hours they spend with others, need they fear that hollow sound of empty conversation.<sup>1</sup>

If the Negro is to reach his full potential, be a producing member of society, he must be well informed. Library facilities and services for Negroes in the South for a long time have been inadequate and not up to the standards of those provided for white people in the same community.

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<sup>1</sup>Mortimer J. Alder, How to Read a Book (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1940), p. 7.

However, inadequate facilities are also found in libraries serving white citizens. The Southern policy has been for separate and equal library services to Negroes, but the fallacy of this policy has resulted in no libraries to serve Negroes or those that have been separate were not equal. Reference is made to the United States Commission on Civil Rights Report that "Two thirds of the Negro population of 13 Southern states were entirely without library services in 1953."<sup>1</sup>

Rice Estes expressed his concern about the problem of segregated libraries in the South in an article in the December 15, 1960 issue of the Library Journal. Estes observed that the American Library Association is the strongest organization of and for librarians and that it had made no overt contribution to the problem of library integration. He challenged the group to take a more positive, as well as a definite verbal stand against segregation. Furthermore, he suggested a few ways in which such a stand may be taken; first, that the Association should join the fight to keep libraries faced with integration opened; second, that the Association's Intellectual Freedom Committee along with

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<sup>1</sup>"U. S. Commission on Civil Rights Report on Southern Libraries," Library Journal, LXXXVII (January 15, 1962), 188.

Northern associations, should urge desegregation through appeals to trustees and officers of Southern libraries and library associations; and third, that the Intellectual Freedom Committee should establish sub-committees, well-informed about all library racial matters, to serve as arbitrators in emergency situations.<sup>1</sup> There has been a great deal of concern on the part of some and little concern on the part of others about the equal opportunity to read. However, there is an increasing awareness that if the Negro is to become a first class productive citizen, his opportunities for growth must be first class. Therefore, it is of vital importance in terms of education and social change all over the South that the public library appraise and re-appraise its present status in order to provide adequately for all of its patrons.

#### Economic and Cultural Background of Salisbury

The city of Salisbury, North Carolina, was founded in 1753 by a charter granted from England. Its first inhabitants were Indians and persons of Scotch-Irish and German descent. Salisbury is located in the central part of Rowan County. Rowan County was formed from Anson County

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<sup>1</sup>Rice Estes, "Segregated Libraries," Library Journal, LXXXV (December 15, 1960), 4418-4421.

a bill passed by the Colonial Assembly.<sup>1</sup>

By 1820 Salisbury ranked sixth in size of all the cities in the state of North Carolina with a population of 2,240. Half of these people were slaves.<sup>2</sup> The United States Census for 1960 reported the population of Salisbury to be 21,297 which included 5,960 Negroes and 15,320 whites. The number of non-whites other than Negroes was negligible.<sup>3</sup>

The median family income of the city was \$5,249 in 1960 with 621 or 11.8 per cent of the families having incomes of less than \$3,000 a year. The median family income reported for non-white families was \$2,527 with 146 or 12 per cent of the total of 1,211 families having incomes of less than \$3,000.<sup>4</sup>

For a number of years industrial employment in Salisbury and Rowan County was centered in two industries, the Southern Railway Shops and textiles. Unfortunately in 1960, the railway shops which had employed over 1,500 persons closed down. However, several new plants have been

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<sup>1</sup>James S. Brawley, The Rowan Story, 1753-1953 (Salisbury: Rowan Printing Company, 1953), pp. 9-20.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 172.

<sup>3</sup>United States, Bureau of the Census, Eighteenth Census of the United States: 1960. Population of the State of North Carolina (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1960), Vol. I, pp. 35-200.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.



established in Salisbury, which have relieved the unemployment situation, such as the Bendix-Westinghouse Company and the Automotive Air Brake Company. In 1962 Salisbury's 120 manufacturing and service industries employed over 10,000 persons. In addition, the United States Veterans' Hospital employs more than 800 persons.<sup>1</sup>

An examination of employment by race and sex revealed in the 1960 Census that of the 923 workers in the professional, technical and kindred group 185 or 20 per cent of them were non-white. There is practically a balance of the sexes in these kinds of work. In addition it showed that 324 or over 84 per cent of the non-white population was engaged as private household workers, with the female sex being the most prevalent. Laborers, excluding farm and mine workers, accounted for 291 or 76 per cent of the non-white workers. Table 1 shows the major occupations of employed persons by race and sex in Salisbury, North Carolina.<sup>2</sup>

The desegregation of public schools in Salisbury has been initiated; however, there are two elementary schools and one high school which are attended solely by Negroes. Four elementary schools, one junior high and one senior high

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<sup>1</sup>Salisbury-Rowan Chamber of Commerce, Salisbury, North Carolina All-America City (Salisbury: Salisbury-Rowan Chamber of Commerce, [April 7, 1962]), p. 6.

<sup>2</sup>United States Bureau of Census, op. cit., pp. 35-230.

TABLE 1

MAJOR OCCUPATIONS IN SALISBURY, NORTH CAROLINA,  
BY RACE AND SEX, 1960<sup>a</sup>

Occupations	Non-White			White			Total Number	Per Cent Non-Whites
	M	F	Total	M	F	Total		
Professional, Technical, and Kindred Workers	95	90	185	397	341	738	923	20.0
Managers, Officials and Proprietors Except Farm	21	..	21	656	121	777	798	2.6
Clerical and Kindred Workers	17	28	45	335	598	933	978	4.6
Sales Workers	17	12	29	439	256	695	724	4.0
Craftsmen, Foremen and Kindred Workers	94	4	98	662	25	697	785	12.4
Operatives and Kindred Workers	178	42	220	588	1252	1830	2050	10.7
Private Household Workers	12	312	324	..	57	57	381	85.0
Service Workers, Except Private Household	186	145	331	204	168	372	703	47.0

TABLE 1 - Continued

Occupations	Non-White			White			Total Number	Per Cent Non-Whites
	M	F	Total	M	F	Total		
Farm Laborers, Except Unpaid and Farm Foremen	4	..	4	4	4	8	12	33.3
Laborers Except Farm and Mine	291	..	291	79	11	88	379	76.7
Occupations not Reported	58	51	109	125	132	257	366	29.7

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<sup>a</sup>Calculated from United States Bureau of the Census, Eighteenth Census of the United States: 1960. Population: General Social and Economic Characteristics, North Carolina (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1960), pp. 35-230.

school were originally provided for white students. All county residents are now served by the five consolidated high schools, two junior high schools and 19 elementary schools.

There are two four-year liberal arts coeducational colleges in Salisbury. One of these, Livingstone College, was founded in 1879 and serves a predominately Negro student body. Catawba College is a predominately white college sponsored by the Evangelical and Reformed Church.

The 1960 Census reported that the median school year completed by persons 25 years old and over was 11.5 and the median school year for the non-white population 25 years old and over was 8.3.<sup>1</sup>

The city of Salisbury provides few cultural activities for its Negro residents. Churches, public schools and fraternal organizations present choral groups, pageants and speakers, and the North Carolina Symphony, the Art Guild and Little Theatre provide the major cultural activities of the Salisbury community. Livingstone College and Catawba College supplement these meager programs by making available to the community the traditional college cultural programs which include concerts, plays, forums, outstanding lecturers and

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<sup>1</sup>United States Bureau of the Census, Eighteenth Census of the United States: 1960. Population of the State of North Carolina (op. cit.), pp. 35-225.

artists.

The major portion of the Salisbury residents are Protestant. Methodists, Baptist, Presbyterians and Lutherans are predominate in the Negro Community, in the order given. Almost all denominations are represented by at least one church. For white citizens, the Lutherans, Presbyterians, Methodist and Baptist faiths are<sup>1</sup> prevelant in the order given. The Salisbury Ministeral Alliance is integrated racially.

#### Purpose and Scope

This study proposes to present the historical growth of public library services for Negroes in Rowan County and Salisbury, North Carolina, from the time of its beginning in 1937 to 1963. Paucity of written material and records, of necessity, limit a complete picture of the beginning years; however, an effort has been made to assemble the scattered and fragmentary records found, to give a picture of the historical growth and development of library service for the Negroes residing in Salisbury and Rowan County.

This study includes the following:

1. Factors relative to the establishment of public library services to the city of Salisbury,

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<sup>1</sup>Salisbury-Rowan Chamber of Commerce, op. cit., p.7.

North Carolina and Rowan County. Since the Rowan Public Branch Library serves the county as well as the city of Salisbury a description of services to Negroes in Rowan County will also be included.

2. Growth and development of the library and library services from 1937 through 1962.

This study is a continuation of a series of studies on the historical development of public library service to Negroes in Southern cities. It is the second such study on cities in North Carolina. The first study was made by Mr. Bennie Lee Moore entitled "A History of Public Library Service to Negroes in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, 1927-1951."<sup>1</sup> Similar studies of other cities in the South have been completed and others are being contemplated.

A study of this type is of value in that it may give further insight into the progress of library service to public officials in the development and improvement of such service and facilities. Other possible contributions of this type of historical research in library growth and development are:

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<sup>1</sup>Bennie Lee Moore, "A History of Public Library Service to Negroes in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, 1927-1951" (unpublished Master's thesis, School of Library Service, Atlanta University, 1961).

1. That a knowledge of the history of libraries is a valuable part of the training and professional growth of libraries;
2. That a history of libraries can help in establishing a background for understanding current problems and in the planning of future actions through experiences of the past; and,
3. That a history of libraries can portray how the functions of a social institution and the support and control of the institution have changed.

#### Methodology

The systematics of this study were mainly historical. Relevant studies of theses on public library services to Negroes in other cities were examined to ascertain what related studies had been made and whether a study had been done dealing with public library service to Negroes in Salisbury, North Carolina. In addition to background information about the city of Salisbury a description of Rowan County was secured from The Rowan Story 1753-1953,<sup>1</sup> and the United States Census.<sup>2</sup> Books, pamphlets, articles, clippings, reports,

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<sup>1</sup>James S. Brawley, op. cit.

<sup>2</sup>U. S. Bureau of the Census, Eighteenth Census of the United States: 1960: Population of the State of North Carolina, op. cit.



and documents were used to assist in gathering information concerning the historical development of the Rowan Public Branch Library. Data concerning the quarters used and services were gathered primarily by general observation and inspection of building facilities and by studying the registration records. Circulation records were used to see how many patrons were served during an eight-week period, December 1, 1962 through January 28, 1963. Data on administrative organization and personnel were found in several forms including handwritten resumes and other records that were available. Also consulted were: newspaper files, clippings and scrapbooks housed in the branch library. Documentary sources such as the minutes of the library board and library clubs, were studied and some published works of local and state history were searched for information.

Permission was obtained from the librarian of the Rowan Public Branch Library to consult library records and statistics in order to determine the library's present status in terms of use and financial support. Interviews with Mrs. Pearl Younge, former librarian of the Negro Branch Library, Miss Edith Clark, librarian of Rowan Public Library and Mr. Issac H. Miller, chairman of the Negro library board, were conducted to secure information concerning the historical development of the library, its quarters, use, services,



organization and personnel. Interviews, were also held with the present librarian of the Negro Branch library, Mrs. Josephine Mitchell and with the custodians of the various bookmobile stops to obtain further information relating to library service to Negroes.

## CHAPTER II

### HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF LIBRARY SERVICE TO NEGROES IN SALISBURY, NORTH CAROLINA

#### The Main Library

The first free library service in Salisbury, North Carolina was provided in 1877 by the "Library Association." Its collection consisted of 23 books and 145 magazines and journals, housed in the office of Dr. J. F. Griffith, a dentist, who served as librarian. It was opened to the public on Wednesdays and Saturdays. In February 1881, the Association turned over its entire holdings to the newly organized Young Men's Christian Association but by 1909 the attempts to establish a library ended in failure.<sup>1</sup>

On March 31, 1911, the Traveler's Club, a woman's literary club, revived the old Library Association, and under the direction of Mrs. J. P. Moore, it organized the Salisbury Public Library which was later to become a part of the Rowan Public Library. In 1914 the library moved to the Old Court House, and by this time its collection had grown to

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<sup>1</sup>James S. Brawley, op. cit., pp. 289-290.

1,500 volumes. This was a subscription library until 1921 when an appropriation of \$300 by the city of Salisbury and Rowan County was made. This marked the beginning of public funds for public library service. In 1921 the members of the Library Association became the Board of Trustees of the Salisbury Public Library.<sup>1</sup>

The Rowan Public Library which got started in a dentist's office, and found itself later occupying a law office, and still later in a part of the court house, was moved in 1951 to its new building located at 201 West Fisher Street.<sup>2</sup> The Rowan Public Library, serving Rowan County and the city of Salisbury now operates a bookmobile and seven branches. Special services and programs offered by the library include: interlibrary loans, adult films, a 16-millimeter projector and screen, which may be borrowed for a small fee for use outside the library; a record collection, available for home use; story hours for pre-school children and discussion groups for adults. The total collection for the entire system consisted of 86,429 books in 1962.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 290.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 291.

<sup>3</sup>Annual Report of Rowan Public Library for the Year Ending 1960-1961, by Miss Edith Clark, Librarian, (Salisbury: North Carolina, 1961).

Miss Edith Clark was appointed librarian in 1936, and was still holding the position in 1962. Miss Clark, the first academically prepared librarian, initiated the reorganization of the library according to the recommended standards of the American Library Association and the North Carolina Library Commission.<sup>1</sup>

### The Negro Branch Library

The first branch library of the Rowan Public Library was designed for the exclusive use of Negroes.<sup>2</sup> In 1937 this Branch was opened as a result of the cooperative efforts and interest of a committee of women led by Mrs. Annie J. Johnson, a Rowan County Home Demonstration agent, and the Negro Civic League, an organization dedicated to community welfare and progress. Mr. I. H. Miller, professor of education at Livingstone College, was very active in the Negro Civic League's efforts. The members of these two groups included city and county residents.

The quarters of this branch consisted of two rooms in a four-room frame house at 233 East Fisher Street. This building also housed the offices of the county's Home and

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<sup>1</sup>James S. Brawley, op. cit., p. 291.

<sup>2</sup>"Library Represents Long-Time Aims," Salisbury Post. September 30, 1951.

Farm Demonstration agents who served Negroes.<sup>1</sup> The branch collection started off with 408 books. Three hundred of these were donated by the North Carolina Library Commission and 108 were deposited by the Rowan Public Library.<sup>2</sup>

The Branch Library operated for five years with the cooperation of civic organizations and the U. S. Works Projects Administration. Civic organizations made donations of furniture, curtains and a few supplies, and the U. S. Works Projects Administration paid the salary of the librarian. When the Works Projects Administration withdrew its support in 1942, the governments of Rowan County and the city assumed the responsibility for the salaries of the Branch's workers and its rent. The county and city each made an emergency appropriation of \$37.50 per month for the continuation of the Branch's operation. This money was administered by the Main Library.<sup>3</sup> Volunteer workers under the supervision of Mrs. Beatrice Riggs Hall, a Negro school librarian of Salisbury, kept the Branch Library opened during the few months after the U. S. Works Projects Administration withdrew

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes of Library Committee, Negro Branch Library, Salisbury, North Carolina, September 13, 1957.

<sup>2</sup>Progress Committee, Negroes in Progress, 1943-1953 (Salisbury: [n.p.], 1953), p. 5.

<sup>3</sup>Isaac H. Miller, Annual Report of Negro Branch Library, Salisbury, North Carolina. July 1, 1943. (Typewritten)

its support until the emergency appropriation was made. In 1951 the city and Rowan County purchased the house, tore it down and built the present Negro Branch Library on the site.<sup>1</sup>

#### Administration of the Library

The Negro Branch Library functions primarily as a circulation and reference unit of the Rowan Public Library. All purchasing, technical processing and professional supervision is performed at the main library.<sup>2</sup>

The Library Committee of the Negro Branch consisted of 12 members elected at a civic meeting called by Mrs. Annie J. Johnson. These persons were: Mrs. Della C. Poe, Chairman, Mrs. Annie J. Johnson, Mrs. Pearl Younge, Rev. A. C. Hunnicut, Mr. K. J. Randall, Mr. E. W. Goodrum, Mr. W. L. Barrier, Mrs. Barbara Jones Taylor, Mr. R. E. Dalton, Mrs. Lee Yates, Rev. David Pharr and Rev. S. R. Johnson. The members of this committee represented the church, the school and business, civic and social organizations of the county and city. Mr. Albert Stout is still a member of the library board of the branch and is a resident of Rowan County. The Library Committee dissolved itself after the completion of the new Negro Branch Library building in 1953,

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Letter from Miss Edith Clark, Librarian, Rowan Public Library, Salisbury, North Carolina, June 17, 1963.

however, before it was dissolved six persons were selected to serve on the new Branch Library board. Mrs. Annie Johnson, who headed the committee of women who worked to establish library service for Negroes was named chairman. The other five persons consisted of the librarian, who has always served as secretary, and a representative of the church and the school, and two other members of the community. Mrs. Annie J. Johnson resigned in 1954 for personal reasons and Mr. I. H. Miller, president of the Negro Civic League, became the chairman. Mr. Miller was still chairman as of 1962. He had also provided leadership in helping to establish the Negro Branch. The board has been permanent since 1954 and is self perpetuating. There are six members on the Negro Library Board. They are: Mr. I. H. Miller professor emeritus of education, Livingstone College, chairman of the board; Rev. J. P. Johnson, pastor of the local Presbyterian church; Mrs. Flora Flack a retired school teacher; Mr. Albert Stout, a nurse's assistant at the United States Veterans' Hospital; Mrs. Ada Craver, a retired school teacher; and, Mrs. Josephine Mitchell, librarian. The board meets quarterly in January, April, July and October, to discuss the Branch's program. The Branch librarian reports to the Board on the activities of the preceding month and



submits recommendations for needs and improvements.<sup>1</sup> There is no formal working or planning on the part of the Negro Board with that of the Board of Main Library.<sup>2</sup>

The public library facilities in Salisbury and Rowan County were quietly desegregated in 1961.<sup>3</sup> Prior to 1961 the Negro citizens of Salisbury were only permitted to use the inter-library loan service to obtain materials from the Main Library. If they were served within the Library, they were not permitted to sit except on special occasions when they were invited to attend public meetings held at the Main Library. Now any resident of Rowan County may obtain a free borrower's card from the Rowan Public Library by giving his name and a reference. There has been no formal public announcement nor publicity given to the desegregation of the Library, except that in the spring of 1963, at a one-day workshop at the Rowan Public Library, mimeographed guides to libraries in the area were distributed with a notation beside the listing of the Main Library stating that it had been desegregated.<sup>4</sup> No record of Negro borrowers is kept at the

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<sup>1</sup>Interview with Mrs. Josephine Mitchell, Librarian, Negro Branch Library, Salisbury, North Carolina, July 2, 1963.

<sup>2</sup>Interview with Miss Edith Clark, op. cit., February 29, 1963.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Interview with Mrs. Josephine Mitchell, op. cit., April 9, 1964.



Main Library, but the writer has observed that the use of the Main Library by Negroes is mostly confined to college students and teachers.

Although the facilities of the Library have been desegregated all of its services have not. The bookmobile still operates on a segregated basis. Furthermore, desegregation has not extended within the administrative structure. A Negro advisory board is still maintained for the Negro Branch, and there is no Negro representative on the Library board of the Main Library. Also there has been no change in the service of the Negro Branch Library. Story hours, book clubs and other sponsored activities are still participated in by Negroes only. Despite the fact that the sign on the building housing the former Negro Branch Library reads County Branch Library and the Salisbury telephone listing is Branch Library, the Library is still commonly referred to as the Negro Branch.

#### Budget

The primary sources of funds for the Negro Branch Library are Rowan County and the city of Salisbury. The funds allocated for the Branch are separate from those for the rest of the public library system, even though they are

administered by the Main Library.<sup>1</sup> The public libraries of Salisbury and Rowan County are not tax supported in the regular sense of the word, and do not receive federal aid. The appropriations received from the city and county are from non-public tax money, such as income from the sale of liquor.<sup>2</sup> There has never been a tax vote for library support in Rowan County or Salisbury. Other sources of funds are donations from organizations and individuals and fine money from overdue books.

In May 1962 the Negro Library Board proposed a budget of \$7,889 with the understanding that Rowan County and the City of Salisbury would share this amount on a 50-50 basis. In the proposed budget, \$1,000 was allotted for books, \$200 for magazines and newspapers and \$6,689 for salaries and other general expenses.<sup>3</sup> This was a large increase in comparison with the proposed budget of 1943, in which \$235 was allotted for books and \$900 for salaries. The total 1943 budget request was \$1,264.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Letter from Miss Edith Clark, op. cit.

<sup>3</sup>Letter to Rowan County Commissioners and Salisbury City Council, from Isaac H. Miller, Chairman of Library Board, Negro Branch Library, Salisbury, North Carolina, May, 1961.

<sup>4</sup>Annual Report of Negro Branch Library, op. cit.

### Branch Library Quarters

The Rowan Branch Library and Extension Building is located at 223 East Fisher Street which has always been a predominately white residential area. It is now becoming a business area and is about three blocks from the downtown shopping district. The Library is located on the first floor of this building and the Home and Farm Demonstration Agents' offices are on the second floor. There is an auditorium which seats 250 persons, located on the ground level in the rear. The Home and Farm Agents and the Library use this room jointly for community and educational meetings of various types.

The building is a dark red Roman brick structure trimmed in dark green wood. A walk leads from the sidewalk to four steps which, in turn, lead to the front entrance of the Library. The front door opens directly into a large reading room for children and adults. The children's reading area, 21 by 26 feet, is to the left of the front entrance. The adult reading area, 14 by 30 feet, is located next to the children's area and it is divided from the children's section by open stacks.

In the children's section are three oval shaped tables, each seating five persons comfortably, and a circulation desk. In the adult area are also three tables. One is

also an oval shaped table which seats five and the two square tables, seat eight persons each. There is a combined total of 32 chairs in the two reading areas. The square shaped circulation desk, to the left of the entrance, is so located that the librarian on duty at the desk can serve both reading areas. An office, eight by 11 feet, located to the right of the entrance, is so constructed that it opens into a workroom, which is eight by 22 feet. The workroom is equipped with built-in cabinets and a work counter. Three sections of wall-high shelving extend over the work counter. Located beneath the work counter are five cabinets and some shelves. A sink is found in the center of the work counter, which is covered with grey porcelain. On each side of the sink are three ceiling high windows. In the rear of the library are found two rest rooms which serve staff and patrons.

The library has such modern features as acoustical celetex in the ceiling, and eight hanging fluorescent lights. The floors are covered with dark green asphalt tile, the walls are of dark red brick and the woodwork is trimmed in light green. There are 12 windows placed on the left wall and seven on the right wall in the reading area.

The library's equipment consists of two 20-tray unit card catalogs, three file cabinets, one dictionary stand, a

book truck, a bulletin board, a radio, a record player, a duplicating machine, a typewriter, one newspaper rack, and one magazine rack. The librarian's office is equipped with an air conditioner which also cools the workroom. The Negro Branch Library is open 44 hours per week, Monday through Friday from 9:00 A.M. until 5:00 P.M. and on Saturday from 9:00 A.M. until 1:00 P.M.

#### Materials Collection

The Negro Branch Library opened in 1937 with an approximate total of 408 books. In 1961, the Branch Library had 7,591 circulating volumes and subscribed to five newspapers, which consisted of four weeklies, two of which were Negro publications, and one local daily newspaper.<sup>1</sup>

Of the 7,591 books in the Library, 5,058 or 66.63 per cent were adult books and 2,533 or 33.37 per cent were books for children. This number does not include three sets of encyclopedias and 167 adult reference tools, a collection of American Heritage books and six volumes of Masterplots.<sup>2</sup> A few more than a half or 52.23 per cent of the adult books were fiction. The books in subject areas were relatively

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>McGill, Frank N. (ed.). Masterplots (New York: Salem Press Corporated, 1958).

scarce. In useful arts there were 360 or 7.11 per cent of the total, in sociology 319 or 6.31 per cent, in fine arts 305 or 6.03 per cent, and there were 269 books classed as literature or 5.32 per cent of the total collection. Some subject areas such as general works, language and philosophy had fewer than 100 books in each area and therefore represent even a smaller percentage of the collection (see Table 2).

The children's books represented one third of the entire collection and 1,739 out of the total of 2,553 or 68.65 per cent of these books were fiction. The books in subject areas were also limited. In biography and history were 135 each or 5.33 per cent, in sociology were 114 books or 4.50 per cent, in the useful arts 106 or 4.19 per cent and science books totaled 91 or 3.59 per cent. Non-fiction represented less than half of the collection and less than 75 books were included in each of the remaining seven subject areas (see Table 2).

The six most represented subject areas in the entire collection of 7,591 books were fiction with 57.84 per cent, useful arts 6.14 per cent, fine arts 4.73 per cent, sociology 5.70 per cent, biography 5.19 per cent and history with 5.28 per cent (see Table 2).

Materials for the Negro Branch Library are selected, ordered and cataloged by the Main Library; however, the

TABLE 2

THE COLLECTION OF THE NEGRO BRANCH LIBRARY  
 BY SUBJECT AREA AND BY PERCENT OF ADULT  
 AND JUVENILE BOOKS, 1961<sup>a</sup>

Subjects	Adult Books	Percent of Adult Books	Juvenile Books	Percent of Juvenile Books	Total Number of Books	Percent of Total Number of Books
General Works	36	.71	..	..	36	.47
Philosophy	70	1.38	..	..	70	.92
Religion	193	3.82	23	.91	216	2.84
Sociology	319	6.31	114	4.50	433	5.70
Language	37	.73	4	.16	41	.54
Science	149	2.95	91	3.59	240	3.16
Useful Arts	360	7.11	106	4.19	466	6.14
Fine Arts	305	6.03	54	2.13	359	4.73



Branch librarian may recommend books and materials which are of particular interest in her patrons. Books are loaned for a period of two weeks, with renewal privileges.<sup>1</sup>

The Main Library houses film strips, maps, slides, pictures and microfilms which may be borrowed by any branch. All branches have access to the books of main collection either on bulk consignment or for an individual request.

The staff of the Negro Branch Library is selected by the Negro Library Board. Since the establishment of the Library in 1937, the head librarians of the Negro Branch Library, have consisted of persons who have had no formal training in librarianship.

There is no record of who served as the branch librarian from 1937 until 1942. Miss Mary Correll, a Works Projects Administration worker, became librarian in 1942 and served until 1943. She was a high school graduate with neither college nor library training.<sup>2</sup> Miss Cathryn Graves became librarian in 1943 and served until 1946. She had recently graduated from Livingstone College, Salisbury, North Carolina, with a Bachelor of Arts degree and a major in elementary education, but had no formal training in

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<sup>1</sup>Letter from Miss Edith Clark, op. cit.

<sup>2</sup>Interview with Mrs. Pearl Younge, former Librarian, Negro Branch Library, Salisbury, North Carolina, July 2, 1963.



librarianship.<sup>1</sup> In 1946, Mrs. Pearl Youngewho formerly worked with the Works Projects Administration's recreation program was appointed librarian and she held this position until 1961. She was a graduate of the Provident Hospital Nursing School in Chicago, Illinois. Her library education was limited to on-the-job training provided by attending library workshops, institutes and professional meetings sponsored by the North Carolina Library Commission. Mrs. Youngeretired in 1961 at the age of 70. She still visits the Library and recites poetry on special occasions.<sup>2</sup> Mrs. Miriam Little, who was the part-time assistant librarian when Mrs. Youngeretired, assumed the position as head librarian. She was a former elementary school teacher who also depended upon library workshops sponsored by the North Carolina Library Commission for library education. Mrs. Little was a graduate of Fayetteville State Teachers College. She served as librarian for one year and resigned for personal reasons. Her part-time assistant, Mrs. Josephine H. Mitchell, the present head librarian, was appointed in July 1962. She is a graduate of Bennett College in Greensboro, North Carolina and a former high school home economics

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<sup>1</sup>Interview with Mrs. Josephine Mitchell, op. cit., July 2, 1963.

<sup>2</sup>Interview with Mrs. Pearl Younger, op.cit., July 2, 1963.

teacher, with no formal library training. The present part-time library assistant is Mrs. Eva M. Crawford, a graduate of Barber-Scotia College in Concord, North Carolina with a Bachelor of Science degree in home economics. Mrs. Crawford has also had no formal training in librarianship. Before she started working for the library she was a former high school home economics teacher and she also served as a Home Demonstration Agent for four years. At present, in addition to her duties as part-time assistant librarian, she works as a part-time assistant recreation director at the Salisbury Negro Recreation Center.

There have been five other assistant librarians, including those who have moved into the position of head librarian. They were Mrs. Theola Shelton, Mrs. Willie B. Aldrich, Mrs. Inez Correll, Mrs. Miriam Little, and Mrs. Josephine Mitchell in the order mentioned. Of the five mentioned all were college graduates, but only Mrs. Willie B. Aldrich had any formal training in librarianship. Mrs. Aldrich had acquired 15 hours in library science at the Atlanta University School of Library Service.<sup>1</sup>

Salary increases are recommended by the Negro Library Board. Mrs. Josephine Mitchell's salary is \$3,400 currently.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

The assistant, Mrs. Eva M. Crawford, receives \$2,200 for her part-time services.<sup>1</sup>

### Circulation

Statistics for the Negro Branch Library are neither accurate nor complete between the years 1937 and 1943, due to laxity or confusion in regard to record keeping during the time of the Works Projects Administration cooperative assistance. In 1943, Miss Cathryn Graves, who served as librarian at the Negro Branch for 1943-1946, began to keep more systematic records;<sup>2</sup> however, evidence of "padding" of the circulation records is suspected from 1943-1946.<sup>3</sup> Registration records of the Branch Library in 1943-1944 showed 534 registered borrowers and 202 or 38 per cent were adults and 332 or 62 per cent were children. There were 3,973 adult books loaned for home use during this year and 4,274 children's books. A little over half of the circulation was children's books.<sup>4</sup> Table 3 shows a definite decrease in circulation after 1945-1946. This marked difference in

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<sup>1</sup>Interview with Mrs. Josephine Mitchell, op. cit., September 10, 1963.

<sup>2</sup>Miller, Isaac H., Annual Report, op. cit.

<sup>3</sup>Interview with Miss Edith Clark, op. cit., July 20, 1963.

<sup>4</sup>Miller, Isaac H., Annual Report, op. cit.

TABLE 3

BOOK CIRCULATION FOR THE NEGRO BRANCH  
LIBRARY, 1943-1963<sup>2</sup>

Year	Circulation				Total
	Adult Books		Children's Books		
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent	
1943 - 1944	3,973	48.18	4,274	51.82	8,247
1944 - 1945	..	..	..	..	..
1945 - 1946	5,979	52.33	5,446	47.67	11,425
1946 - 1947	1,404	45.97	1,650	54.03	3,054
1947 - 1948	1,531	44.26	1,928	55.73	3,459
1948 - 1949	1,207	42.54	1,630	57.46	2,837
1949 - 1950	1,438	51.49	1,355	48.51	2,793
1950 - 1951	890	43.80	1,142	56.20	2,032
1951 - 1952	1,047	52.30	955	47.70	2,002
1952 - 1953	450	47.77	492	52.23	942
1953 - 1954	973	26.75	2,664	73.25	3,637
1954 - 1955	1,238	37.17	2,004	61.83	3,243
1955 - 1956	1,210	42.62	1,629	57.38	2,839
1956 - 1957	1,328	44.34	1,667	55.66	2,995
1957 - 1958	1,441	48.44	1,534	51.56	2,975
1958 - 1959	1,145	43.16	1,508	56.84	2,653
1959 - 1960	1,072	59.92	717	40.08	1,789
1960 - 1961	1,444	47.64	1,587	52.36	3,031

TABLE 3 - Continued

Year	Circulation				Total
	Adult Books		Children's Books		
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent	
1961 - 1962	2,603	41.75	3,632	58.25	6,235
1962 - 1963	2,474	35.70	4,456	65.30	6,930

<sup>2</sup>These figures do not include bookmobile circulation for which no record was available.

circulation may be attributed to poor record keeping. When Mrs. Pearl Young was hired in 1946 the circulation records were reported as being accurately kept and the figures for 1946-1947 indicate a total circulation of 3,054 as compared to 11,425 for the previous year.

Looking at Table 3 it may be readily discerned that in general more children's books have circulated in the past 20 years than adult books. Only four annual circulation reports, during the period, indicated higher per cents of adult than juvenile book circulation. The largest proportion of adult books circulated during 1959-1960, when the general circulation figures were reported as being relatively low.

In 1960-1961 a total of 3,031 books circulated, and of this number 1,444 or 47.64 were adult books and 1,587 or 52.36 per cent were children's books. The years of 1945-1946,

of 1943-1944, and of 1947-1948 and 1953-1954 in that order, show the highest circulation for the Negro Branch Library. In 1943-1944 there were 3,973 adult books loaned for home use and 4,274 children's books. An increase in circulation may be noted beginning in 1960-1961 after a drop in the two previous years. From 1962 to 1963 a total circulation of 6,974 books was reported. Of these 6,930 books 2,474 or 35.70 per cent were adult and 4,456 or 64.30 per cent were children's books (see Table 3).

#### Circulation by Subject

In a study made of the Library's book circulation by subject during an eight-week period from December 1, 1962 through January 30, 1963, it was found that the total circulation was 1,014.<sup>1</sup> Out of these 1,014 books, 531 or 52.37 per cent were children's books and 483 or 47.63 per cent per cent were adult (see Table 4). Further it was found that 251 persons borrowed books from the Library during this period. Of the 251 persons 186 or 74 per cent were children and 65 or 25.9 per cent were adults.<sup>2</sup>

In addition 223 or 42.9 per cent of the adult books

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<sup>1</sup>Circulation Records, Negro Branch Library, Salisbury, North Carolina, 1962.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

TABLE 4

CIRCULATION STATISTICS BY SUBJECT,  
DECEMBER 1, 1962 - JANUARY 30, 1963

Subject	Adult Books			Juvenile Books			Total
	Dec.	Jan.	Total	Dec.	Jan.	Total	
General Works	2	1	3	..	..	..	3
Philosophy	2	11	13	1	..	1	14
Religion	14	12	26	1	5	6	32
Sociology	16	24	40	37	34	71	111
Language	3	..	3	5	10	15	18
Science	10	23	33	30	25	55	88
Useful Arts	17	29	46	16	20	36	82
Fine Arts	8	10	18	7	10	17	35
Literature	3	5	8	10	..	10	18
History	17	16	33	3	..	3	36
Travel	2	6	8	2	..	2	10
Biography	19	10	29	18	..	18	47
Total Non-Fiction	113	147	260	130	104	234	494
Per Cent Non-Fiction	40.07	73.13	53.83	48.14	39.84	44.06	48.71
Fiction	169	54	223	140	157	197	520
Total	282	201	483	270	261	531	1014



borrowed during the eight-week period were fiction. The other four larger subject areas represented by adult circulation were useful arts, with 46 books, sociology with 40 books, science with 33, and history with 33 books. In the other subject areas fewer than 30 books circulated during the period (see Table 4).

The children's circulation figures were larger than those of the adults. The four most popular subject areas represented were fiction with 297 or 57.1 per cent, sociology with 71 books, science with 55 books, and the useful arts with 36 books. In the other nine subject areas fewer than 36 books in each circulated. The largest circulation for the eight-week period occurred in the following subject areas: sociology, science, useful arts and history (see Table 4).

#### Registration of Borrowers

Due to inaccurate records kept prior to the 1943-1944 Library report, already mentioned in the discussion of the circulation of the Negro Branch Library, the report of registration begins with 1943-1944 year.

Children under nine years of age are not permitted to register nor to borrow books; however, parents are permitted to borrow books for these younger children.



Registration of borrowers is by card, and requires date of registration, name and address. No weeding of the registration files has been done and a new registration is not required when juvenile borrowers reach adult age. The figures in Table 5 represent new registrations by year of adult and juvenile borrowers. In seven instances out of the 18-year registration report there were more children involved than adults. From 1955 to 1961 there was a definite decrease in the total registration, but 1961-1962 witnessed an increase of 120 more registered borrowers most of whom were children.

TABLE 5  
STATISTICS OF NEW REGISTERED  
BORROWERS BY YEAR

Year	Adult Registration		Children's Registration		Total
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent	
1943 - 1944	202	38.00	332	62.00	534
1944 - 1945	94	42.92	125	57.08	219
1945 - 1946	..	..	..	..	..
1946 - 1947	76	63.87	43	36.13	119
1947 - 1948	73	74.49	25	25.51	98
1948 - 1949	54	56.84	41	43.16	95
1949 - 1950	59	62.77	34	37.23	94
1950 - 1951	36	52.17	33	47.83	69

TABLE 5 - Continued

Year	Adult Registration		Children's Registration		Total
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent	
1951 - 1952	76	48.10	82	51.90	158
1952 - 1953	17	40.48	25	59.52	42
1953 - 1954	203	58.33	145	41.67	348
1954 - 1955	161	43.51	209	56.49	370
1955 - 1956	162	76.42	50	23.58	212
1956 - 1957	151	70.89	62	29.11	213
1957 - 1958	127	55.46	102	44.54	229
1958 - 1959	65	63.11	38	36.89	103
1959 - 1960	46	46.00	54	54.00	100
1960 - 1961	74	49.33	76	50.67	150
1961 - 1962	91	33.70	179	66.30	270

Fiscal year begins July 1.

#### Summary

Rowan Public Library was established in 1911 under the sponsorship of the Travelers' Club, and was then located in a law office on the corner of Fisher and Church Streets. Later in 1914 the Library was moved to its present location at 201 West Fisher Street. It was originally

designed to serve only white people.<sup>1</sup>

In 1937 through the interest of Rowan County and Salisbury Negro citizens, and with the cooperation and aid of the Federal Works Projects Administration, the Negro Branch Library was established. All purchasing, cataloging and professional supervision was and is still being done by the Main Library.

The Negro Branch was the first branch of the Rowan Public Library. It is located on the same site, 221 East Fisher Street, that it occupied when the Branch was first established. The Branch Library has an advisory Board which consists of six members. This Board draws up the budget for the Branch which is submitted to the Main Library for approval.<sup>2</sup>

There has never been a tax vote for library support in Rowan County and Salisbury. Funds for the support of the Library are provided from non-tax money, such as money from the sale of liquor.<sup>3</sup> There has been an increase in the budget over the years. A budget of \$7,229 was proposed for the 1961-1962 fiscal year.

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<sup>1</sup>James S. Brawley, op. cit., pp. 289-290.

<sup>2</sup>Letter from Mrs. Edith Clark, op. cit., June 17, 1963.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

Miss Edith Clark, present librarian of the Rowan County Library, Salisbury, North Carolina, was the first trained librarian in the Rowan County system. She assumed her duties in 1936. The one full and one part-time staff member of the Negro Branch, although not trained librarians, are college graduates with experience in working with the general public. Mrs. Josephine Mitchell, the librarian for the Negro Branch receives a salary of \$3,400 per year. The part-time assistant Mrs. Eva Crawford receives \$2,200 per year.

The Negro Branch Library functions primarily as a circulation and reference unit of the Rowan Public Library. All purchasing, technical processing and professional supervision is done at the Main Library; however, the branch librarian may recommend books for purchase.

The Negro Branch Library is housed on the first floor of an attractive modern building constructed of dark Roman brick, trimmed in dark green wood. This two-story building houses the Negro Branch Library and the Rowan County Extension Agencies. The interior is composed of five rooms. The main reading area is so designed with flexible shelving to look like two rooms. Stationary partitions divide the office and workroom from the stacks and reading areas. Restroom facilities are located at the rear of the

Library.

From 408 books in 1937 the Branch's collection grew to 7,591 in 1961. It subscribes to four newspapers, three weeklies and one daily. Due to lack of space, most non-book materials are housed in the Main Library and each branch may borrow these materials.

Children borrow more books than adults. An eight-week study of borrowers in 1962-1963 revealed that 74 per cent were children. This Negro Branch records show an increase in the total registration of borrowers for the past year after several years of decline.

### CHAPTER III

#### ACTIVITIES AND SPECIAL SERVICES

Two activities which are sponsored by the Negro Branch Library program are in connection with Negro History Week, and National Library Week. The Library also sponsors book clubs, discussion groups and a pre-school story hour. The sponsorship and the interest in these activities has fluctuated during the years; however, there has been an effort on the part of the librarians to keep these library programs alive. These activities have been provided to stimulate and encourage reading, to acquaint the patrons with the resources of the Library, to encourage research and study. It is hoped that the children's activities will motivate juvenile patrons to become habitual readers of good books throughout their adult lives.

Not too much emphasis or publicity has been given to Negro History Week. The traditional posters are displayed in the Library and a short article announcing the observance of Negro History Week is placed in the Negro news column of the Salisbury Post.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Interview with Mrs. Pearl Younge, op. cit., July 2, 1963.

National Library Week has been given more attention because the whole library system takes an active interest in it. Besides posters and bookmarks used in the Library, articles appear in the Salisbury Post announcing the date of the observance of National Library Week. An open house has been held at the Main Library and at the Negro Branch from time to time. On these occasions at the Negro Branch parents are invited to come in for a social hour and to see new books on display. In 1958, in addition to the open house, a film was shown entitled "The Library Story," after which the librarians gave a short talk about the services and materials available at the Negro Branch Library. Refreshments were served at the end of the program. In 1963 three discussions related to the appreciation of fine arts were held during the National Library Week observance. These discussions included talks by the librarian on music and art books in the collection. One evening was devoted to the playing of recordings by famous musicians like Chopin, Beethoven and Mozart. After the playing of the records biographical information about the composers was discussed. Attention was called to books related to the fine arts through a display.

#### Children's Activities

The Branch Library sponsors two vacation reading



clubs during the summer for boys and girls. The Bookworm Club includes boys and girls from the ages of eight through 11 and the Intermediate Book Club includes boys and girls from 12 to 15 years old.<sup>1</sup>

The Bookworm Club was the first club organized at the Negro Branch Library. It was started by Mrs. Pearl Younge in June 1959. This Club still meets during the summer on each Thursday afternoon from 1:30 until 2:30. When it was first organized it started its meetings on or about June 20th and closed around August 10th. Beginning in 1962 the Club began its summer reading program on July 8th after the closing of the vacation Bible schools and ended it about the middle of August.<sup>2</sup> Each member, in order to qualify for a reading certificate, is required to read at least 12 books during the summer reading program. Six of the books are to be selected from a reading list compiled by the librarian. The reading list includes some of the standard classics, new books and books in various subject areas.<sup>3</sup>

The Intermediate Book Club was organized July 21,

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<sup>1</sup>Interview with Mrs. Josephine Mitchell, op. cit., July 2, 1963.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Interview with Mrs. Pearl Younge, op. cit., July 2, 1963.

1963 by Mrs. Josephine Mitchell, librarian of the Negro Branch Library, because of the desire of children over 12 years of age to continue to participate in the reading program. This club meets each Friday afternoon from 1:30 to 2:30 during the summer.

Each club has its own officers and has from eight to 18 active members. At the weekly meetings each child is given an opportunity to review the book he has read and to select new books for further reading. The librarian gives guidance in the selection of books. The entire summer reading program is climaxed with a party for all children who participate. Parents and friends are invited to the party and certificates are awarded to those who have read 12 books or more during the summer.<sup>1</sup>

The pre-school story hour has been a part of the Negro Branch's library activity since 1942. Mrs. Pearl Younge was a frequent guest story-teller before she became the librarian in 1946. She still continued after her retirement to do this. During the years the attendance has dropped to five or six children but the program has been kept alive with the help of parents who gathered children in their neighborhoods and brought them to the

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<sup>1</sup>Interview with Mrs. Josephine Mitchell, op. cit., September 10, 1963.

Library.<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Rachel Osborne Boler was one of the parents who helped to keep the pre-school story hour alive between 1953 and 1955, by bringing her neighbor's children to the Library.<sup>2</sup>

In 1955 Mrs. Willie B. Aldrich was appointed assistant branch librarian. She volunteered to transport children who did not have means of getting to the Branch and each Thursday morning about 20 children were picked up by car and brought to the Library for the story hour. After a month of this, some parents began to bring their own children, but as many as three trips per day were made by Mrs. Aldrich to gather children and to return them to their homes. This procedure continued until 1957 when Mrs. Aldrich resigned. The 20 children mentioned did not include the 15 children from Miss Lucy Spartley's kindergarten. In the winter Mrs. Spartley's pre-school group participated in the pre-school story hour. In 1959 Mrs. Brewer's kindergarten also began participating in the pre-school story hour. Because the children's section is small and the kindergarten enrollment was from 25 to 30 pupils, the librarian was contacted in advance of a proposed visit.

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<sup>1</sup>Interview with Mrs. Pearl Younge, op. cit.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

The method of conducting story hours has been varied. The librarian may read to the group, tell a story, play a recorded story or illustrate and tell a story with the aid of a flannel board. Mrs. Younge loved to tell stories and the children delighted in her telling of old favorites as well as those she made up from her imagination. Mrs. Mary A. Hopkins, who teaches English at Livingstone College was guest storyteller three times during the 1946-1950 period. She brought to the children miniature scale models of the stories constructed by education students at the college.

A flannel board and flannel storybook characters were purchased in 1956 and a record player was given to the Branch in 1959 by Mrs. Claude Morris, chairman of the Rowan Public Library Board. The flannel board is used to illustrate a story as the librarian tells it to the children.

The story hour is still operating with an average attendance of 15. During the 1962-1963 year Mrs. Nora L. Robinson, a first grade teacher, Mrs. Vietta Roberts, a sixth grade teacher and Mrs. Ethel Clifton a housewife, were guest story-tellers at the Branch.

#### Adult Activities

The Branch's adult activities include discussion

groups and a library club. In 1953 two American Heritage discussion groups were initiated by the Rowan Public Library in Salisbury. Participation was limited to 60 persons to include not more than 30 white people and 30 Negroes in each group. The white group met in the meeting room of the Rowan Public Library and the Negroes met in the Negro Branch Library. This series of discussions was scheduled to begin January 8, 1953 and to run six weeks each year. Study materials were provided through the courtesy of the Ford Foundation and the American Heritage program, which was sponsored in North Carolina by the State Library Commission. Themes of the discussions were centered around American history and its relationship to the present. Some of the topics discussed were "The Pilgrim Fathers," "The Struggle of the South" and "Great Historic Places."<sup>1</sup>

Mr. L. H. Hall, a retired school principal, was chairman of the Negro discussion group and Mrs. M. A. Hauser, a civic leader was the co-chairman. There were 19 persons enrolled in this group, including the librarian, Mrs. Pearl Younge and the assistant librarian. These American Heritage programs lasted until 1955.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

The second study and discussion group was organized in 1963, and had for its theme "Freedom vs. Communism; the Economics of Survival." Mr. L. H. Hall also served as chairman of this group. Not only was he the chairman, but he was instrumental in getting it organized by contacting the Salisbury Chamber of Commerce which co-sponsored the program and provided the necessary books. Mr. Hall also solicited the aid of the Branch Library staff to mail 50 letters to Negro civic leaders and parents inviting them to join the discussion group and to aid in other ways to interest the public.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Hall secured resource leaders for the group and the first meeting was held in February 1963 with 30 persons enrolled. The four panel leaders were Dr. Harold L. Trigg, Professor of Education at Livingstone College; Attorney John H. Rennick; Miss Betty Verbal, Instructor of History at Livingstone College; and, Mr. Levi Walker of the Biology Department at Livingstone College. Eight topics were discussed during the six-week period: "The Communist Challenge," "Consumer Control" or "Controlled Consumer," "Profit Motive or Master Plans," "Who Gets What?," "The Role of Government," "The Big Picture," "Meeting the Economic Challenge," and "What You Can Do about Communism." Certificates

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<sup>1</sup>Interview with Mrs. Josephine Mitchell, op. cit., July 2, 1963.



were given to persons who attended five meetings out of the eight. There were about 15 persons in attendance each night and 10 certificates were awarded at the closing program.<sup>1</sup>

Another adult activity sponsored by the Library is the Friends of the Library Club. This group was organized in October 1961 and was composed of housewives and mothers interested in bringing the library and the community closer together. The Club met each Thursday from 10:30 A.M. to 12:00 Noon. The purposes of the Club were to provide an opportunity to solve some of the every day problems, such as those dealing with marriage, children in the home, and recreation; and to stimulate reading interest among parents and introduce library facilities to the public.<sup>2</sup>

One of the functions of the Club was for its members to bring children to the story hour and the Club's meetings were scheduled each Wednesday morning at the same time as that of the story hour. Each week a member was to be prepared to review a book she had read. Mrs. Willie B. Aldrich now librarian of Hood Theological Seminary, Livingstone College, was invited to give pointers on book reviewing, to discuss the importance of reading, and to suggest sources of

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.



book reviews.<sup>1</sup>

The Friends of the Library Club is responsible for the organization of the three city book-stops, which have been discussed in Chapter II. Mrs. Louise Kelly was the president and Mrs. Margaret Wyatt was secretary. There were 19 members enrolled in the Club, but only 14 were active. Although the Club became inactive in May 1962, the book-stops were still functioning in 1963.<sup>2</sup>

### Book Stops

The huge increase in circulation in 1961-1962, which is more than double that of the previous year, may be attributed partially to the work of the Friends of the Library Club. This is a group consisting of housewives who work with the Library's program and who are interested in bringing the Library and the community closer together. Another factor may have been the personal contact with citizens on the part of the staff.

The Friends of the Library has organized and maintained book-stops in three central areas of Salisbury. At each stop about 50 books are deposited which are loaned to children who live too far from the Library to visit it.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

These book-stops are in private homes, selected by the Friends of the Library Club and the librarians. Here books are left on deposit monthly to be borrowed by children who live near by. These children are properly registered by the housewife or home owner in charge.<sup>1</sup> The stops are located in three different areas of town, "Dixonville" (East End) the Civic Apartments (West End) and "Jersey City" (North End).

Mrs. Margaret Wyatt, is in charge of the West End book-stop. She lives at 54 P Civic Park Apartments, which is a federal low rent housing project. Mrs. Wyatt is a graduate of Livingstone College, Salisbury, North Carolina and holds a degree in business education. She is a housewife and mother of three children.

Children are permitted to come to the Wyatt apartment and browse and select books between 3:00 and 6:00 P.M. No record is kept by Mrs. Wyatt of the number of books read and borrowed by her patrons. She serves about 16 to 18 children per week, and their ages range from those of pre-school age to junior high school students. The books are kept on shelves in Mrs. Wyatt's utility room. Mrs. Wyatt reads many of the books deposited with her and makes herself

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

available for questions and assistance when needed by the children.<sup>1</sup>

Mrs. Iona House has charge of the East End book-stop. She lives at 43 K Brookview Apartments. She is a domestic worker, the mother of four children, and completed the 9th grade in school. Brookview Apartments are also federal low rent housing projects. Mrs. House reported little success with circulation. Only one child borrowed a book during a period of four months from June to September, 1963. During an interview it was pointed out that perhaps her low summer circulation was due to the fact that for the first time the public school libraries of Salisbury were opened during the summer months; however, Mrs. House stated that circulation has been poor ever since she took the stop. Mrs. House keeps her books in a box in a closet. Books may be borrowed at any time during the day or evening because some one is home at all times.<sup>2</sup>

The book-stop located on the North End is maintained by Mrs. Willie May Massey at 408 Best Street. Mrs. Massey is a high school graduate, 78 years old and for 21 years

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<sup>1</sup>Interview with Mrs. Margaret Wyatt, Housewife, Salisbury, North Carolina, September 5, 1963.

<sup>2</sup>Interview with Mrs. Iona House, Ibid., September 9, 1963.

worked as an assistant in a doctor's office.<sup>1</sup>

In 1959 Mrs. Massey organized a club for young people in the Jersey City area because she wanted to "keep the young folk busy and off the streets." She invited leading citizens of Salisbury to come to her home and give talks on citizenship and character building. In 1961 Mrs. Massey's home became one of the three city book-stops and she serves about 25 children per week. The Young People's Club, which became an outlet for her books, meets each Wednesday at her home. Children usually return books on club meeting day. Books are loaned for two weeks and the children are allowed to browse at their leisure. Mrs. Massey registers each borrower by card and in a ledger which she keeps for registration and she has about 50 registered borrowers. The library's books are kept on a small table in her dining room. Mrs. Massey said that at one time she kept the books in a bookcase but the children said they could not get to them easily. About once each month Mrs. Massey sponsors an inexpensive social hour for the children. The neighbors have also cooperated by having parties, and by donating refreshments. There are about 75 children in this neighborhood and about 30 to 40 per cent of them read continuously.

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<sup>1</sup>Interview with Mrs. Willie Mae Massey, Ibid., August 30, 1963.

Most of the residents of the "Jersey City" community own their own homes and are in the lower income brackets, earning between \$2,000 to \$3,000 yearly.<sup>1</sup>

#### Bookmobile Service in Rowan County

Recognizing the importance of bringing books to those persons who did not have easy access to the public library, bookmobile service was initiated in 1948 for the white residents of Rowan County and in 1953 for the Negroes.

The services of the bookmobile are supervised by the Main Library bookmobile librarian with the assistance of the Branch librarian. Bookmobile service is offered two days per month to Negroes and 17 stops are made.<sup>2</sup> From 1953 until 1958 the stops included five county schools, two stores, two beauty parlors and the rest were individual homes. As of 1958 library service to the county schools was discontinued to encourage schools to provide their own libraries for the students.<sup>3</sup> The bookmobile operates from 9:30 A.M. until the day's schedule is completed which is usually about 5:00 P.M. on Monday and until 3:45 P.M. on

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Interview with Mrs. Pearl Younge, op. cit., July 2, 1963.

<sup>3</sup>Interview with Miss Edith Clark, op. cit., July 20, 1963.

Tuesday. In 1963 the bookmobile (with books arranged by the Dewey Decimal System and juvenile books separated from adult books), stopped at the homes of: Mrs. Martha Henderson; Mrs. Thelma Montgomery; Mrs. Sallie Steele; Mrs. Leavie Miller; Mrs. Maggie Knox Phifer, Mrs. Bertha Houston, Mrs. Mary Johnson, Mrs. Estelle Bush, Mrs. Mabel Weathers, Mrs. J. N. Phillips, Mrs. Myrtle Watson, Mrs. Mary Robinson; Mrs. Nathalie Reece, and Mrs. Albert Stout. These persons selected the books to be circulated in their immediate neighborhoods.

Mrs. Martha Henderson, works part-time as a domestic worker. She usually leaves books to be returned to the bookmobile on her porch. She circulates from 30 to 60 books per month. Her stop has one of the largest circulations in the county. The books are kept in a bookcase in her living room and persons wishing to select books are allowed to browse and select at any time she is at home.<sup>1</sup>

Mrs. Thelma Montgomery, is a housewife and is at home usually all day. She keeps her books in a bookcase in her den and circulates from eight to 10 books per month.<sup>2</sup>

Mrs. Sallie Steele works as a dishwasher in a

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<sup>1</sup>Interview with Mrs. Martha Henderson, Housewife, Rowan County, September 9, 1963.

<sup>2</sup>Interview with Mrs. Thelma Montgomery, Ibid.



restaurant. She is seldom at home when the bookmobile makes its stops; however, her teen-age daughter meets the bookmobile and selects about 10 books each month. The books are kept in a bookcase in the living room. This is almost a family stop, for few persons come to borrow books to read outside of the immediate family.<sup>1</sup>

Mrs. Leavie Miller is also a housewife and has nine children. She keeps the books in a box in her home. Mrs. Miller has organized a book club which meets once each month in her home and several members are over 75 years of age. She knows what kinds of books her neighbors like and tries to select books for their individual tastes. Mrs. Miller reported that most of her readers select their books by phone. She tells them what she has in her house and then they come to get them. She usually selects from 20 to 35 books each week.<sup>2</sup>

Mrs. Maggie Knox Pheifer is a retired elementary school teacher. Library books are stacked behind the front door on the floor of her living room. Mrs. Pheifer usually selects and circulates about 50 to 70 books per month in the summer; however, her circulation falls off during the school

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<sup>1</sup>Interview with Mrs. Sallie Steele, Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Interview with Mrs. Leavie Miller, Ibid.



months to about 20 books per month. This is because she lives directly across the street from the Cleveland School and the children have access to the school library.<sup>1</sup>

Mrs. Bertha Houston is a housewife, and this stop is used mostly for her family's reading. She seldom selects over 10 books.<sup>2</sup> Another bookmobile stop is being contemplated in Mrs. Houston's area which might be able to serve more of the community.

Mrs. Mary Johnson is also a housewife and keeps her books in a box in her home. Hers is a relatively new stop and she has not been able to make many contacts in the community to inform people of the stop.<sup>3</sup>

Mrs. Estelle Bush, maintained a stop at her fresh produce store until 1960. She had four tables, eight chairs and bookshelves constructed for the use of her borrowers and had constructed a special one room building about nine by eight feet for her patrons. This structure is now being used for living quarters. Mrs. Bush's stop is no longer an active one due to her illness.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Interview with Mrs. Maggie Knox Pheifer, Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Interview with Mrs. Bertha Houston, Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Interview with Mrs. Mary Johnson, Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Interview with Mrs. Josephine Mitchell, op. cit., September 10, 1963.

The second day bookmobile route begins with Mrs. Mabel Weathers. All the women on the second day route are housewives and they keep the books in bookcases in their living rooms.

Mrs. Weathers usually selects about 70 books. Mrs. J. N. Phillips selects from 10 to 15 books. Mrs. Phillips does not allow children under 10 to carry books home but they may read freely at her home as long as they wish.<sup>1</sup>

Mrs. Frances Carrington is an invalid and her children help to take care of the books. In the Carrington home one finds books systematically arranged by the Dewey Decimal System and juvenile books are separated from adult books. She keeps a circulation record and usually circulates about 50 books per month.<sup>2</sup>

Mrs. Wincie Loftin has about 12 books in her home. Mrs. Ola Mae Thompson replaced the stop maintained at Mrs. Ann's Beauty Shop, in 1960. Even though she is ill, she usually selects about 15 books for lending.<sup>3</sup>

Mrs. Myrtle Watson selects from 10 to 15 books. Mrs. Mary Robinson usually selects from 30 to 40 books and

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

Mrs. Nathalie Reece usually selects about 50 to 60 books. Mrs. Albert Stout who had maintained a stop since 1958 and usually handled from 20 to 30 books is ill and is no longer active.<sup>1</sup>

All books deposited with the home owners are counted as circulation for the Negro Branch Library. Persons in charge of stops are not required to keep a record of how many times the books circulate. Therefore the figures given by them in regard to circulation are only estimates.<sup>2</sup>

#### Summary

The quality and quantity of children and adult activities have fluctuated over the years; however, the librarians of the Negro Branch Library of Salisbury and Rowan County have more or less attempted to provide adequate functional programs with the aid of volunteers who were interested and in many instances very capable.

Summer reading clubs are sponsored during the summer months, in addition to the regular story hour for pre-school children. Discussion groups for adults are scheduled for a six-week period during the winter months and the Friends of the Library Club are responsible for organizing and

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

maintaining city book-stops in residences, in three central areas of the city. These stops serve persons who live too far to have easy access to the Library. The Library also sponsors activities in connection with Negro History Week and National Library Week. Bookmobile service which began in Rowan County for Negroes, in 1953, is offered two days per month. There are 14 home depositories and the volunteer helpers maintaining these stops are housewives.

## CHAPTER IV

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this study was to present a historical study of public library services for Negroes in Rowan County and Salisbury, North Carolina, from the time of its beginning in 1937 to 1963. Consideration was also given to the desegregation of library facilities in Rowan County in 1961.

Salisbury is located in the central part of Rowan County. Its early inhabitants were Indians and persons of Scotch-Irish and German descent.<sup>1</sup> In 1820 half of Salisbury's population of 2,240 was Negro and by 1960 the proportion of Negroes decreased to 28 per cent of the total or 5,960 out of 21,297.<sup>2</sup> The non-white family median income in 1960, was less than half of that of the total population. Most of the people in Salisbury are employed by manufacturing and service industries, and the majority of Negro occupations are classified as service workers, domestics, and laborers.

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<sup>1</sup>James S. Brawley, op. cit., p. 15.

<sup>2</sup>U. S. Bureau of the Census, Eighteenth Census of the United States: 1960. Population of the State of North Carolina, op. cit., Vol. 1, pp. 35-200.

The median educational level (8.3 years) of the Salisbury Negro is three years lower than that of the total population (11.5 years). Even though the public schools have been racially desegregated there are two elementary schools and one high school which have all Negro pupils.<sup>1</sup>

The city of Salisbury and Rowan County began to develop and support jointly a public library in 1921. Financial resources have continuously come from commodity taxes rather than property taxes. Its services were planned for the benefit of only white people until 1937. After some years of effort on the part of Negroes, two rooms in a frame house in a predominately white neighborhood were designated as the Negro Branch Library. In 1951 a new central library building was completed and in 1952 a new Negro Branch building was opened on its original site.

Library service to Negroes in Salisbury got started during the economic depression period of the 1930's and was subsidized by the federal government's Works Projects Administration which paid salaries until 1942. Public library service to Negroes in Salisbury was from its beginning inferior to that which was available to white citizens. The segregated Negro Branch was governed by a Negro Board which

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

consisted of persons who seemed capable of holding such positions but were handicapped by the effects of the bi-racial cultural pattern of the community. The Board's powers and functions were not clearly stated. Two specific duties of this Board are those of hiring the branch librarian and preparing the budget to be presented to the Rowan County and Salisbury City Council. The Main Library is governed by a Board which consists of all white people and there seems to be no official relationship between these two boards.

The relationship of the Negro Branch to the Main Library would appear to be a perfectly normal one, were it not for the presence of this Negro Board. The allocation of funds, technical processing and book selection for the Branch are done at the Main Library. Books for purchase may be recommended by the Negro librarian, but the final selection is the function of the staff of the Main Library.

Through the years the Negro Board has proposed exceedingly low budgets for the operation of the Branch. In 1943 the request was for \$1,264 and in 1962 it had been raised to \$7,889.<sup>1</sup>

The Negro Branch is in a rather attractive two-story,

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<sup>1</sup>Interview with Mrs. Josephine Mitchell, op. cit., July 2, 1963.



red brick building. The Library quarters are on the first floor and seats are available to accommodate 32 persons. The second floor is used by the County's Home and Farm Demonstration agents.

Beginning in 1937 with a meager collection of 408 books, the Branch by 1961, had acquired a total of nearly 8,000 volumes. About one third of these were children's books. Over half (57.8 per cent) of the entire collection was fiction. Throughout the past 20 years more children's books have circulated than adult books.

There has never been a trained librarian on the staff of this Branch. The librarians have been college graduates who benefitted by some in-service training. One assistant librarian had acquired 15 hours of course work in library service. Staff salaries have always been low. In 1962 the full-time branch librarian was earning \$3,400 and a part-time assistant was being paid \$2,200.

It was impossible to determine how many active borrowers use the Negro Branch because the registration files have never been weeded. The annual total of new registered borrowers have fluctuated over the years ranging from 534 in 1943 and down to 42 during 1962-1963.

Aside from the general circulation of books the Branch has not contributed very much to an adult educational

program. National Library Week has brought adults to the Branch to lectures and music hours. In the 1950's the library system sponsored two American Heritage Programs one for whites and one for Negroes. For six weeks the segregated groups studied about the history of their native land. A Friends of the Library Club was an active group of 19 Negro housewives which functioned for a year. The members brought children to the Branch for story hours which were carried on while the adults enjoyed book reviews. This group also was responsible for activating three library book deposit stations in low-income neighborhoods of Salisbury. Books are left in the care of housewives who in turn circulate them to children in their immediate neighborhoods.

Story hours for children in the Branch have been rather successful. Much of this success has been due to the active interest of Negro adults who have helped transport children to the library and who serve as story tellers.

In 1948 the white people of Rowan County began receiving bookmobile service from the city-county library. Five years later in 1953 this same bookmobile began serving Negroes two days per month. Originally the bookmobile served Negroes deposit stations in four schools, two stores, two beauty parlors and some residences. Visits to the

schools were discontinued in 1958 and eventually by 1963 the deposit stations were to be found only in 17 homes. The housewives select anywhere from 10 to 70 books and circulate them, for the most part, to neighborhood children.

The Rowan-Salisbury Public Library was desegregated in 1961 and this move has had little or no effect on the Negro Branch Library. It is still called the Negro Branch by laymen and its staff and clientele are still Negro. Likewise the change in the clientele of the Main Library is barely evident. Occasionally a few Livingstone College students and other Negro citizens avail themselves of its services. There is still the Negro Board for the Negro Branch Library and there is no Negro on the City-County Library Board.

With Negroes representing 28 per cent of the population of Salisbury, one discerns that a large segment of the city's population is in the lower educational and income brackets. This presents a great challenge to the Library to work toward upgrading the quality and quantity of library service, particularly with this segment of the population.

The services rendered to Negro adults in Salisbury and Rowan County throughout the history of the Library have left much to be desired. The children have fared much better, thanks to so many well meaning but poorly prepared

volunteers.

The need for trained professional librarians is obvious and in order to attract such personnel the salary scales of the library system should be thoroughly examined for the purpose of revision.

Since the public library is an educational institution the trustees of the system who have the responsibility of financing the library might consider the possibility of trying to get some property tax money to supplement the Library's income from commodity taxes.

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